

Metro Parks



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Massachusetts

Appendix C

Stewards of the Open Spaces

The Metropolitan District Commission is an integrated service agency whose mission is the enhancement of the quality of life for urban Boston and the surrounding communities by providing open space, historical sites, recreational facilities, zoos, MetroPolice, concerts, clean water and educational programs to the capital region. MetroParks and parkways connect Boston and forty-six surrounding cities and towns to each other and our common environment, emphasizing our unique natural and cultural heritage and integrating the region as a whole.

MetroParks, MetroPolice, Watershed Management, Park Engineering and Construction, and Central Services work together to provide a unified system of services which make our region the best that it can be for all citizens, rich and poor, young and old.

- *By patrolling parkways and making sure roads are safe.
- *Teaching thousands of children how to swim and skate, sail and play tennis.
- *Fighting forest fires.
- *Sponsoring hundreds of free concerts.
- *Keeping the supply of drinking water pure for 2.5 million consumers.
- *Operating flood control dams around the clock.
- *Organizing volunteer cleanups at area parks and beaches.
- *Preserving history on the Boston Harbor Islands.
- *Building bridges, roads and recreational facilities.
- *Removing disabled motorists from harm's way.
- *Keeping the public informed on road conditions and special events.
- *Facing choppy seas to rescue stranded boaters.
- *Planting thousands of flowers to beautify the -metro region.
- *Working every day of every year to make the metropolitan area safer and more enjoyable for all.

Charles Eliot:

Pioneer of Open Spaces



In 1892 a young landscape architect, Charles Eliot, proposed that the State, Boston, and surrounding communities create a regional park system. An apprentice of Frederick Law Olmstead, great American parks maker and designer of Boston's Emerald Necklace, Eliot felt that the human spirit needed contact with nature to soar.

Eliot wanted large tracts of land for the public's refreshment and education, reservations, ocean and fresh water beaches, hilltops, riverbanks, islands and scenes of natural beauty. A system of parkways was also desired to connect the open spaces to one another and the Boston parks, while providing pleasant access from the centers of population. By 1900 the outline of Eliot's plan was completed, preserving 9,177 acres of reservations, 13 miles of ocean frontage, 56 miles of riverbanks, and seven parkways.

In 1919 the Metropolitan Parks Commission together with the Water and Sewer Commissions formed the Metropolitan District Commission. Over the years the MDC added to the parks system, while also providing an ever expanding number and variety of services to residents and visitors to the Boston region. Many skating rinks and swimming pools were built in the 60's and 70's. In 1985 the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority assumed the water distribution and the sewer disposal functions allowing the MDC to focus on the extensive system of park recreational facilities and watershed lands. After nearly a century, the MDC continues to find creative ways of serving all the people of Metropolitan Boston.

1



2



4



Watershed
Management
Land

1. Quabbin Reservoir
4. Sudbury Reservoir

FACTS AND

The Charles River Basin was the first impoundment of an estuary in an urban environment.

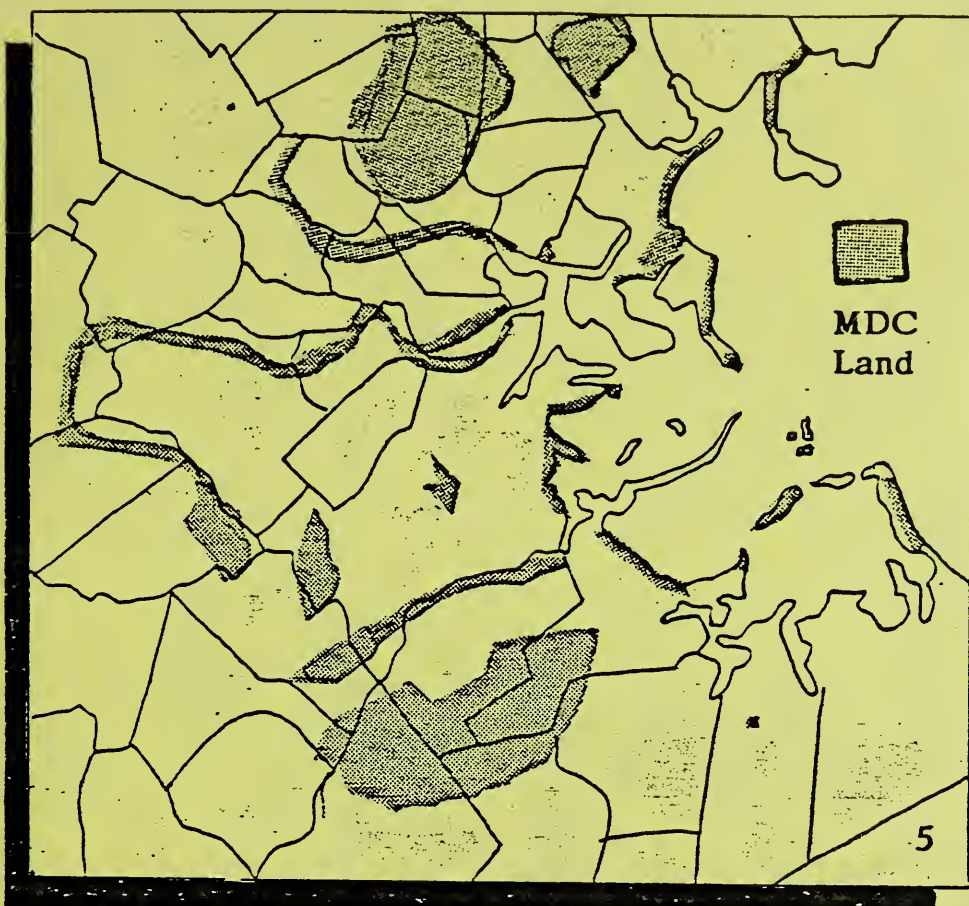
The shore of the Charles River has 17.7 miles of continuous parkland and bicycle trails.

The Quabbin Reservoir is the second largest man-made impoundment of drinking water in the world.

Castle Island is the oldest continuously fortified site in British North America.

The Metropolitan Parks Commission, predecessor to the MDC, was the first regional parks system in the United States.

Fort Warren is the largest fortification open to the public in the Northeast.



2. Ware River Watershed 3. Wachusett Reservoir
5. Metropolitan District Commission Park System

D FIRSTS

The MDC serves fifty-four Massachusetts cities and towns with a population of 2.5 million.

The agency maintains over 15,000 acres of parks and reservations, 650 lane miles of parkways and boulevards and more than 100 bridges.

The oldest working weather station in the United State is located in the Blue Hills Reservation.

The first public artificial skating rink is the Ulin Rink in Milton.

The first public mechanical ski lift in the United States was installed at Big Blue.

The oldest public bathing beach in the United States is MetroParks' Revere Beach.

Metropolitan Network of Services

Reservations and Interpretive Services manages the extensive park system. Interpreters conduct programs such as kayaking, wetland walks, berry picking and celebrations of colonial history. Foresters and rangers oversee natural and cultural resources.

Recreational Facilities and Programs offers recreational activities for the entire family at MetroParks pools, rinks, ski areas, beaches, parks and playgrounds, sponsors hundreds of free concerts and other special events, and promotes fitness.

Watershed Management keeps the supply of drinking water pure for 2.5 million residents of Massachusetts. Watershed Management was established in 1984 with the mandate to oversee the region's reservoirs and watershed lands. Forest management and wildlife protection are among its responsibilities.

Central Services operates as the agency's strong right arm. Its craftsmen keep facilities running smoothly and efficiently. Central Services personnel aid stranded motorists and remove disabled vehicles from metroparkways. During storm emergencies they work around the clock.

Park Engineering and Construction serves the people of the Metropolitan area by maintaining 650 lane miles of parkways, more than 100 bridges and an elaborate flood control system anchored by the region's two large dams, the Charles River and Amelia Earhart.

Metropolitan Police, created in 1893 with a mandate to "Protect and Preserve" is the third largest police force in New England. More than 600 officers patrol and enforce the law on metroparkways, the Boston Harbor Islands, three rivers and more than 300 recreational and historic sites.